

Happy New Year!

I hope that you all had a fun, yet relaxing, holiday season (no matter which holidays you were celebrating).

I was sworn in on the 1st of the year for my second term. Also sworn in were re-elected Commissioner Liz Stefanics (District 5), incoming Commissioner Miguel Chavez, incoming County Clerk Geraldine Salazar, and incoming County Treasurer Patrick Varela. The ceremony turned out very nicely, and it actually didn't take too long -- even with the speeches.

I am going to be Chair of the Board of County Commissioners in the coming year. This means that I will be far busier trying to make sure that the meetings go smoothly. I may not be able to write as many messages as I have in the past about issues. But I will do the best I can to keep you informed.

I have several priorities in the coming year. My top priority will be to shepherd the Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC) first to completion and then to adoption by the Board. It has now been over two years since the Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) was unanimously passed, and it is high time that we follow through on the implicit promise we made to all the people in our community with the SGMP. The SLDC has many features that will improve how we deal with proposed development in the County:

- True zoning for the entire County (including "Use Lists" for the different zones)
- Design standards -- for roads, easements, buildings, water/wastewater utilities, water conservation, parking, signs, storm-water management, management of solid waste disposal, terrain management, landscaping, energy efficiency, open space, and lighting
- Streamlined procedures for processing applications to the County Land Use Department
- Processes for informing and involving public with regard to upcoming development in a timely way
- Regulations for "Developments of Countywide Impact" (e.g., sand and gravel operations)
- Basing approval for major developments on whether "Adequate Public Facilities" exist
- Clearly-defined procedures for inspections, penalties, and enforcement of violations of the SLDC

Another important priority for my stint as Chair will be to identify how the County can improve its capability to deal with solid waste. The Solid Waste Task Force was convened last year for this reason. No decisions about final recommendations have been reached, but the next step is to make interim recommendations while awaiting the results of a County-wide survey (asking what people are now doing with their solid waste and how much it is costing them). We know that only about 30% of the residences use the Solid Waste Transfer Stations, so before the Task Force can make overall recommendations, the members felt that they should have more information about what is occurring now.

Also, at the end of the month, the Board of County Commissioners will be having the first public hearing on a proposed revised Animal Control Ordinance. A little over a year and a half ago, a focus group was convened to work on rewriting the County Animal Control Ordinance. There were members who worked on this for around a year, one each from the five commission districts, plus Audrey Velasco (our Animal Control Officer), a representative of the Sheriff's Department, Mary Martin and Bill Hutchison from the Animal Shelter, and I. This ordinance has some important improvements:

- Minimum standards of care for pets and other animals held by people clearly defined
- Regulations for physical restraint of animals in public areas
- Provisions for regulated feral cat colonies
- Strong incentives for spaying and neutering pets to limit unwanted animals from being born

- Fees and penalties more in line with the costs of administering an animal control program so that the County will have sufficient staff

If you would like to see a copy of the proposed ordinance and the fees, please either contact me, or go to our County website and look under "Hot Topics" on the homepage.

In addition to the initiatives of Countywide impact, there are many things going on at a more local level. District 4 has a number of these types of projects that are being currently worked on, and I will do my best to see that the process is as smooth and as expeditious as possible.

There are always requests for road improvements, and since the General Obligation Bonds passed in the November election, there are a number of roads in District 4 that are slated for improvements of various sorts: chip sealing, paving, etc.

In addition, the County is now in the process of engineering the pipe system that will bring County Utility water out to Cañoncito. One other project that I am very eager to see move forward is improvement of the Glorieta water system. In fact, we will soon be accepting roughly \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant money to begin to connect and improve the water systems of Glorieta Estates and the Village of Glorieta.

I can tell already that I am going to be busier than I ever have been as County Commissioner. But please feel free to contact me at any time with any concerns or issues that you have. I will do my best to respond as quickly as possible.

My best wishes to you all for the upcoming year,

-Kathy

p.s. I just got notice of a new way to send comments into the County. Here is the press release:

Santa Fe, NM – January 7, 2013 - Santa Fe County has launched a new online comment form for residents. The new form was developed to be easy and quick to fill out. The tool allows residents the opportunity to leave their contact information so staff can follow through with them, or they can bypass the contact information fields by simply clicking an anonymous button.

“Santa Fe County would like to hear from residents. The new online form will help us gauge our services and identify areas where we need improvement. It will also be a great way for us to find out what our constituents are really concerned about,” said Commission Chair, Kathy Holian.

The new online comment form can be found at http://www.santafecountynm.gov/contact_us/public_comment_form or by selecting “Public Comment Form” from the Quicklinks dropdown menu on the homepage www.santafecountynm.gov.

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